

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

SERVICES WELL BEATEN ON POINTS.

SCRAMBLING PLAY FOR THREE PARTS OF THE GAME.

CITY'S COMBINATION AT FAULT.

An ideal afternoon favoured the visit of the Portsmouth Services team to Kingsholm, and a large crowd gave the naval officers a splendid reception. The Services were without Davies or Kershaw, the famous half-backs, and several other regular players. Gloucester fielded as advertised.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK: J. C. Collett.

THREE-QUARTERS: N. Daniell, S. Stone, S. Brown, and S. Crowther.

HALF-BACKS: T. Gough and T. Millington.

FORWARDS: F. W. Ayliffe, T. Voyce, Major Roderick, S. Smart, A. Hall, M. Evans, T. Coulson, and S. Bayliss.

UNITED SERVICES.

BACK: S. Boucher.

THREE-QUARTERS: K. S. Jefferson, A. B. Usher, R. R. Lyle, and J. L. Rees.

HALF-BACKS: F. E. Chevallier and J. Burnett.

FORWARDS: F. A. Haines, J. H. Dale, O. Bevir, J. B. Farrant, C. E. Robinson, D. Or-Ewing, J. Leech Porter, and R. S. Benson.

Referee : Mr. H. Shewring (Bristol).

THE GAME.

(By J.H.H.)

Ayliffe kicked off, the Services playing with the sun in their eyes. There was no return, and Voyce had hard lines in knocking on. Gough got the ball from the scrum, but the pass to Millington went astray, but Brown secured and sent to touch. The visitors then set up a strong attack, which was temporarily checked by a good kick to touch by Millington. Collett put in a lengthy kick, but Voyce was off-side, and the advantage was lost.

A likely movement by the visiting backs was ended by a fine leg tackle by Stone, and the home forwards came away with a strong dribble. They kicked over Boucher's head, but Rees got back and ran to touch. The Gloucester forwards kept up the pressure for a time, but the visitors again worked to the centre by good use of the touch line.

The Gloucester forwards heeled beautifully, and Gough fed Millington, for the fly half to cut through splendidly, but Stone failed to accept his transfer, and the Services' forwards set up a determined dribble. Collett checked them, but it was left to Voyce to spoil the movement.

After the Services' backs had again handled, the home threes got to work, and invaded the visitors' 25, where a cross-kick was taken on by the home forwards, who reached the Services' line in a fine dash, Ayliffe scoring a try near the posts after Voyce had handled. Millington made no mistake with the goal kick, and after ten minutes' play Gloucester were five points up.

This reverse served to stimulate the visitors, who rushed to the home 25 and keenly tested the defence. They were awarded a penalty in a fair position, but Burnett made a very poor attempt to kick a goal. The home threes were playing with good effect, and Crowther was seen in a sharp run down the wing.

The Services continued to press for a time, and then the Gloucester forwards asserted themselves, and Voyce was conspicuous in a rush. The Services made an unsuccessful attempt to kick a goal from a mark, and later Collett made a mark, which was really useful. Another fine movement by the City backs saw Crowther run up the line and cross-kick, but although the home team carried the ball to the Services' 25, they were unable to pierce the defence.

The kick out was a good touch finder, and from the line-out the visitors came away with a dangerous dribble. Millington and Collett trying vainly to stop them. Evans, however, got back, and picking up cleverly, he ran round the attacking forwards and sent to touch, thus easing an anxious situation.

Collett now left the field for a moment or two during which time the visitors penetrated to the City 25 and made a determined attempt to open their account. Gloucester were severely tested and several times it looked as though a try was certain, particularly when Jefferson received a wide lob pass.

The defence held out and the return of Collett occurred just as relief came through a nice handling movement, Crowther again using the cross-kick with good effect. Then Brown ran through wonderfully and had a clear run, had he been able to gather the ball cleanly.

The game continued to be keenly contested, the visitors gaining considerable advantage from time to time with splendid touch-finding. The Services were attacking when the interval came.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal
UNITED SERVICES Nil

It was evident that the teams were very well matched, and Gloucester were fortunate in having a five points lead at the interval. On the resumption the kick went astray, and a scrum took place at the centre, from which Gough got the ball away to Millington, who sent to touch well up.

Further ground was gained from the line-out, and a melee took place on the visitors' line. Millington received from a scrum and tried to break through, but was held up. Then Voyce rushed round and passed to Daniell, but the wing man had not enough room to get clear.

Again the Gloucester men tried to get over, the ball being thrown out wide to Stone. Brown ran round outside, and Crowther was there as well, but they were too well marked and were bored to touch. Gloucester continued to exert great pressure, and a forward rush saw one of the home men go over and fall on the ball, but he was recalled.

Then Daniell tried to drop a goal, his kick missing by a yard or two, after which the Services had a little respite. They were compelled, however, to remain on the defensive, and had great difficulty in keeping the City out. After a short stoppage for an injury to a Services man the ball came to Voyce, who ran well and sent a pass to Daniell, who, however, could not get clear. Then Jefferson put in a spectacular run for thirty yards, but the home backs were too fast for him, and he was pulled down.

Gloucester returned to the attack, and the forwards carried the game back to the visitors' territory. Collett put in a mighty kick which was smartly fielded by Boucher, but his kick failed to reach touch. Crowther gained ten yards by a pretty run down touch. Then Collett picked up and put in a cross-kick, which had it been a little milder would have sent Daniell in without opposition.

From the line out the ball got loose and Bayliss in the course of a struggle on the line fell over with Gloucester's second try, which Millington majorised with a splendid kick.

The Services were unable to take advantage of the restart, and the home team quickly had them penned in again. In the course of a strong forward burst Hall went over with another, but this time Millington's kick went wide.

The Services now made an effort, and with good forward work penetrated to the City quarter, but it was only a flash in the pan, and the Services were again defending more desperately than ever. They had several very narrow escapes, once when the Gloucester three-quarters handled and Crowther missed a poor transfer from Stone with a clear run in.

A further score was not long delayed. Gough ran round the scrum, and, cutting through, sent to Hall, who ran strongly and passed to Daniell, who managed to ground near the corner flag in spite of the attendance of three defenders. Collett this time essayed to goal, but failed.

Gloucester were weakened by the loss of Millington, who had a nasty knock and was carried to the dressing-room, but the visitors, although they managed to clear the invaders from their quarter, were unable to set up a real attack. Then a beautiful movement by the home backs led to a further goal. Gough, Hall, and Daniell handled beautifully, and the wing man kicked across to Voyce, who was in place nicely and grounded behind the posts. Voyce also goaled.

Another exciting movement by the home backs quite beat the defence, but Bayliss, who came up, passed out wildly, and Daniell missed a certain try.

Voyce delighted the crowd with a determined rush in front of the grandstand, but this was the signal for a wonderful attack by the Services, who, after a preliminary attempt, secured a beautiful try through Burnett, the half-back executing a fine individual run which ended beneath the posts. Burnett also converted.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 3 goals 2 tries (21 pts.)
UNITED SERVICES 1 goal (5 pts.)

RUNNING COMMENTS.

(By W.B.)

Unable to sit down with any comfort, and forbidden to stand about at Kingsholm owing to the risk of further trouble and suffering – and yet at the same time anxious not to miss such an exhibition of Rugby as the meeting of Gloucester and popular Services team from Portsmouth has always provided – I had recourse to the good offices of Mr. Sid Freeman, at the White Hart Hotel, and he kindly provided me with accommodation at a front room window, from which I was able to obtain a splendid view of the enclosure, and with the aid of a pair of field glasses to follow the play minutely. After the City team's fine showing at Cardiff the Committee could hardly have done otherwise than give the same side a further opportunity of distinguishing itself. Sid Brown happily had recovered sufficiently to be able to take his place at centre, and Hall was not troubled with his knee to the extent suggested after the Cardiff game.

Tom Millington was singled out for a special demonstration in honour of his marriage, which took place this week. The popular vice-captain was anxious to keep the wedding quiet, but his playing colleagues and other football admirers could not allow such an event to pass without doing something to show appreciation of his worth.

The players of the First and Second teams presented Millington with a nice clock suitably inscribed. The Committee also subscribed towards a present; and a very pleasing recognition was paid by a few admirers through the agency of that keen sportsman, Mr. W. G. Ayliffe, the result being a present of two armchairs. Good for Millington, to whom I extend, on behalf of myself and readers, heartiest congratulations and the best of wishes. Tom Gough, too, was warmly complimented on his selection to partner Millington for Gloucestershire against Devon next Saturday. Gough has gone on improving since his display against the Harlequins at Twickenham, and a host of admirers will wish him the best of luck in his championship debut at Bristol. Carter (Bristol) and Watkins (Stroud) were strong rivals, but the Committee decided to stand or fall by the City Club pair.

I anticipated the inclusion of a couple of young forwards at least in the County pack, but the selectionists have again placed their faith in the men who won honours last season. The only new men in the team are Chantrill (full-back) and Gough (half). Evans appeared in one match, in 1921-2, and the Bristol University player and old Wycliffe College boy could not be kept out of the side on form. The personnel of the Services team undergoes frequent changes, and to-day's combination differed considerably from the side so well beaten last season. But the great disappointment was the absence of both Davies and Kershaw, the English International half-backs, owing to injuries.

Davies appeared in both the previous games at Kingsholm, but Kershaw had each time been unable to make the journey from Portsmouth, and it is doubtful now if Gloucester enthusiasts will ever see the famous pair together. The Services were also minus H. W. Stevenson and C. F. Halloran (Irish Internationals), and three regular forwards and full-back – all on the "crooked" list. These absentees rather tended to weaken interest in the game as a test, though one had not forgotten a similar reduced playing strength was good enough to account for the Harlequins.

The opening stages of the game were somewhat scrappy, and for a few minutes the Services had rather the better of the exchanges. Then the City forwards took matters in hand and there was a series of sharp attacks, but the visiting defence was very sound. One or two movements by the home backs did not develop on the lines intended and there were mistakes in handling which upset matters. The Gloucester pack, however, still demonstrated superiority and play for the most part was in the Services half.

Gloucester at length opened the scoring, and it was mainly through a clever cross-kick by Daniell after the wing man had recovered an awkward pass from Stone. Voyce and Ayliffe were well up when the ball dropped in front of the posts. The International missed, but the captain made no mistake and planted the ball over the line near the upright. A nice try and well worked for. Millington succeeded with the easy place.

The Services, despite their weakened ranks, by no means did badly in subsequent play, and Lyle, the right wing, brought off a fine run but was forced to pass. Gloucester muddled up things somewhat on several occasions, and play was not going with that accuracy and finish one could have wished. Crowther two or three times was well served by Brown, but he could not get the desired opening, Lyle and Rees marking very closely. The football was keen and open, but there was no sustained finish, and really no particular incident of merit.

Gloucester on the whole were not playing up to form. The forwards heeled a good deal, but Gough was erratic in giving out his passes, and more than once they went wide of Millington, and the visiting forwards were not slow in taking advantage. And so the game went on till the interval, when Gloucester could only claim a five points lead. Credit to the Services for doing so well, yet home supporters had cause for disappointment at the moderate showing of their favourites.

Gloucester started the second half in promising style, and with forwards and backs doing well the Services had a very anxious time in the first five minutes. But the old fault was there when an attacking move was initiated, and one or two good openings were thrown away by faulty passing. The City forwards continued their bustling tactics with a good deal of success, and with the backs kicking well they had a fair share of the game. Disappointment, however, was keen in the absence of any of those clean passing movements which so appeal to the crowd.

The Services benefitted on two or three occasions from erratic Gloucester passes, and once broke through finely but fell a victim to a tackle by Hall. There was little improvement in subsequent play, but Gloucester eventually showed up with some dashing forward play, and Stone, for the first time, shone with a tricky run, but in trying to cut inside the second time he was brought down. The City pressed vigorously after this with sharp footwork and Bayliss was credited with a try, followed soon after by another from Hall. The scores were very welcomed, but still the play was not specially distinguished.

The City had most of the game after this, and one fine opening resulted from a round of passing, only to see Crowther fail to take his transfer. Still Gloucester maintained the pressure, and Norman Daniell scored the best try so far, the result of a splendid dash for the corner with a couple of opponents hanging on to him.

The Services had a short spell of attacking after this fourth reverse, but it afforded Gloucester the opportunity of showing their real worth. In the City 25 the home halves opened out and Stone was sent away. He stumbled and then recovered to serve Daniell, who raced away on the right. With a perfect cross-kick the right-winger placed the ball in front of the posts, and Voyce had only to pick up and score. It was a lovely combined effort, and stood out easily as the one feature of the game up to date.

But from the kick-off Gloucester started another attacking move which only just failed in another try. The passing and inter-passing amongst the forwards and backs was perfect until the final transfer was thrown away, with Daniell waiting with an open goal. The Services were not discouraged, and near the end crossed with their solitary try – a well-deserved reward for some keen and well-directed efforts.

Gloucester won easily enough on points, but I cannot say the display of the City was worthy the side. No doubt the worrying tactics of the visiting forwards upset the home combination, but all through there was a lack of steadiness and finish, and the handling, except on rare occasions, was not good. The home forwards were at their best in the open, and here Voyce was a prominent figure, tackling well and making some strong bursts.

Gough's play at scrum half suffered through his erratic serving. This placed Millington at a distinct disadvantage, and the vice-captain was, in consequence, less in the picture than in recent games. Behind, Daniell was the best of the quartette, being very strong in attack, and displaying capital judgment all through. Stone was not given a great deal to do, but once or twice he doubled his man very smartly, and he knows how to give a pass.

Collett was very sound at full back, and Boucher also did well for the visitors. Chevallier and Burnett worked hard at half, and the latter's try at the finish was smartly obtained. The forwards showed good footwork, and kept the ball well under control when dribbling. But they did little in the way of opening out – the absence of Davies and Kershaw probably accounted for this. With the Internationals present Gloucester would have had a difficult task set them, but the tactics adopted would have been changed, and a brighter display all round witnessed.

The following skit caused much amusement amongst the City players :

Battalion Orders, by General F. W. Ayliffe,
Commanding Gloucester Football Club:
Lce.- Corpl. Gough promoted to Lce.-Sergt.,
without pay, on promotion to County honours. –
Signed B. N. Roderick, Major and Adjutant.